



STALKE OUT OF SPACE

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New gallery project Performed by Sam Jedig

Stalke Out Of Space
Vesterbrogade 15A, Backyard

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When Stalke Galleri began its operation in 1987, the idea was to create an alternative to existing galleries and art institutions in Denmark. We wanted to convey national and modern international art, to create contact and knowledge across established boundaries.

Stalke Gallery was recognized as a mediator of art, a concept, a method, an institution. Galleries have now reached a point where their institutionalization has developed to the extent that it undermines the process of mediation and the artistic expression itself.

The project that replaces Stalke Gallery's traditional operation, Stalke Out Of Space, aims to make the gallery institution more visible in itself and its presence. The fixed gallery format is replaced by art spaces that are not defined as physical spaces in traditional terms: museums, art collections, and galleries. They symbolize and activate already-established art forms. Instead, it becomes a flexible operation. Stalke Out Of Space moves its focus as an institution from room to space, where gallery institutionalization is displaced to focus on the individual room, its significance, and its forum, as well as the artists' use of it.

In the relationship between gallery and artist, a different, unconventional form of collaboration becomes necessary, as the aesthetic as well as commercial frameworks for each exhibition must be built from the ground up. The artist's work thus becomes part of the gallery's operation. And conversely: the gallery institution becomes part of the exhibited art.

Our aim with the project Stalke Out Of Space is to create an alternative exhibition format – alternative for both artists, the audience, and art mediators.

Sam Jedig



Logo for Stalke Out Of Space with black typography on a white textured surface symbolizing the gallery's walls and conceptual foundation.

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Stalke Out Of is a unique construct on the Danish art scene. The concept for Stalke Out Of Space was created as a rupture with the traditional, rigid forms of exhibition and representation practiced by galleries—a framework to which art has generally been forced to submit.

The concept came into existence as the result of one man's vision—Sam Jedig's—but also as a natural link in a process that met the demands of the time to redefine the role of art in society.

Several tendencies have intersected and amplified one another: Since the breakthrough of modernism in the mid-19th century—with Édouard Manet as its leading figure—progressive art has, more or less deliberately, turned its back on its audience. To an increasing extent, it has become elite art for an elite audience. Art is no longer created for an "external audience," but rather for oneself and one's peers. However, the loss of wealthy patrons and its bourgeois audience has made art proletarian. As a consequence, almost no artist in Denmark can make a living from their art alone—at least not art that requires exhibition. Artists sustain themselves through commissioned decoration work, teaching, or night shifts at the post office.

This situation, however, grants the artist a new creative freedom: when he or she cannot sell their work and does not rely on it for a living, there is no longer a need to create objects designed for sale or to exhibit in commercial galleries.

In a society of material abundance, where advertising agencies and tourist brochures glorify beautiful and perfect images such as sunsets, splendid landscapes, idyllic nature, and beautiful bodies, these motifs have almost become reprehensible. They are now viewed as postcard-like and sentimental. Traditional aesthetics have been replaced by a preference for what was once considered ugly and poor—for the worn-out and overlooked: an aesthetic of decay.

This tendency is amplified by the proletarian status of the artist, and as a result, much of the most important progressive art today is created and exhibited in empty warehouses or condemned buildings. Necessity becomes a virtue.

The de-commercialization of art, the new artistic freedom, and the evolving aesthetics have given rise to new communicative needs—needs that differ from those in the traditional gallery context. Consequently, many artists are left to spread the word about their work on their own.

Bent Petersen, 2001/tekst for the catalogue

